

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Appln. No. 09/780,485

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A foamed rubber which has an average cell diameter of 1-150 μm , which cell is formed by a blowing agent having a decomposition temperature of 170° or above, a hardness as determined according to JIS-K-6301 of 30-100 and a density of 0.7-1.1 kg/l.

2. (original): The foamed rubber according to claim 1, wherein the foamed rubber comprises a foamed ethylene- α -olefin-non-conjugated diene copolymer rubber.

3. (withdrawn): A process for producing a foamed rubber which comprises the steps of:
 - (1) blending 100 parts by weight of a rubber and 4-15 parts by weight of a blowing agent having a decomposition temperature of 170°C or above, to obtain a composition,
 - (2) continuously molding the composition obtained in step (1) with a continuous molding apparatus, to obtain a molded body, and
 - (3) continuously heating the molded body obtained in step (2) to effect vulcanization and foaming, thereby to obtain a foamed rubber which has an average cell diameter of 1-150 μm , a hardness as determined according to JIS-K-6301 of 30-100 and a density of 0.7-1.1 kg/l.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Appln. No. 09/780,485

4. (withdrawn): The process for producing a foamed rubber according to claim 3, wherein the rubber used in step (1) is an ethylene- a-olefin-non-conjugated diene copolymer rubber.

5. (withdrawn): The process for producing a foamed rubber (3) continuously heating the molded body obtained according to claim 3, wherein the composition obtained in step (1) has a Mooney viscosity (ML₁₊₄, 100°C) of 30-160.

6. (withdrawn): The process for producing a foamed rubber according to claim 3, wherein the blowing agent used in step (1) is at least one member selected from the group consisting of azodicarbonamide and dinitrosopentamethylenetetramine.

7. (withdrawn): The process for producing a foamed rubber according to claim 3, wherein the continuous heating to effect vulcanization and foaming in step (3) is conducted by a means selected from the group consisting of

- (i) a means of continuously heating in a hot air oven to effect vulcanization and foaming,
- (ii) a means of continuously heating in a glass bead fluidized bed to effect vulcanization and foaming,
- (iii) a means of continuously heating in a fused salt bath to effect vulcanization and foaming, and

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Appln. No. 09/780,485

(iv) a means of continuously heating with a heating apparatus additionally provided with a high frequency heating device upstream and/or downstream the above-mentioned means (i)-(iii).

8. (original): A composite which comprises a foamed rubber having an average cell diameter of 1-150 μm , a hardness as determined according to JIS-K-6301 of 30-100 and a density of 0.7-1.1 kg/l and a rigid body integrally bonded to each other.

9. (original): The composite according to claim 8, wherein the rigid body has a Young's modulus (E_0) of 10^2 - 10^6 MPa.

10. (original): The composite according to claim 8, wherein the rigid body is selected from the group consisting of metals and metal alloys which are iron, steel, cast iron, aluminum, magnesium, copper, tin, nickel, gold, silver and stainless alloys; composites of one or more of said metals and metal alloys with one or more other substances; an engineering plastic which is polyetherketone; composites of said engineering plastic with one or more fibers, fabrics or non-woven fabrics; crystalline resins which are polyester, polyamide, polypropylene and polyethylene; composites of one or more of said crystalline resins with one or more fibers, fabrics or non-woven fabrics; amorphous resins having a glass transition point of 80°C or above which are polyethylene terephthalate, polymethacrylate and polystyrene; and composites of one or more of said amorphous resins with one or more fibers, fabrics or non-woven fabrics.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Appln. No. 09/780,485

11. (previously presented): The composite according to claim 10 further comprising a metal salt of acrylic acid.